

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

160441Z Sep 04

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 005233

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [I2](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE CONVOY FOR TAL AFAR

REF: BAGHDAD 958

11. (SBU) Levent Sahinkaya, MFA Head of Department for International Organizations, called in Pol-Mil Counselor on September 15 to request USG cooperation in delivering Turkish humanitarian assistance to Tal Afar on September 17. Econoff, Task Force Olympia LNO and Alp Ay, of the MFA International Organizations Department, also sat in on the meeting.

12. (SBU) Sahinkaya said that the GOT had appropriated USD 1 million in relief for Tal Afar, the first tranche of which is to be sent by the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) in a 7-TIR truck convoy via the Habur Gate this Friday. The convoy will include 2 trucks of food, 2 of water, 2 of tents and 1 of blankets. TRC also plans to send ambulances, communications vehicles and medical personnel. He provided us with a diplomatic note describing the convoy (see para 5 for further details), and stated that the GOT is in contact with the Department, the Iraqi Interim Government in Baghdad and the Iraqi Embassy in Ankara on this subject. Sahinkaya told us TRC was putting together a list of staff and materials traveling in the convoy, and that this would be shared with us in the near future. Some TRC staff are planning to stay on after distribution of assistance to conduct a needs assessment in Tal Afar. He added that the GOT has asked the Iraqis for appropriate security coverage for the convoy.

13. (SBU) Pol-Mil Counselor said that Turkish assistance was welcome, but that proper coordination with the Iraqi authorities, as well as with other relief efforts, is essential. He urged Sahinkaya to establish direct contact with Ninewa Assistant Governor Arafat, the IIG's point of contact on humanitarian assistance for Tal Afar (reftel), and to keep the Embassy and Task Force Olympia informed of developments related to the convoy. Sahinkaya agreed to do this. Polmilcouns also welcomed that the TRC would do an independent needs assessment. He noted that there had been a lot of erroneous information in the Turkish press, and that the TRC would likely discover that the situation is not nearly as dire as some local press reports suggest.

14. (SBU) Comment: Task Force Olympia LNO observed that the Task Force would also be sending its own relief aid to Tal Afar. In order for Assistant Governor Arafat to prevent the Turks from duplicating our efforts, it will be important that he also be informed of our assistance and reconstruction activities. End Comment.

15. (SBU) Begin text MFA dipnote 2004/UKGY/386389:

URGENT

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America in Ankara and has the honor to inform that the Turkish Government has decided to dispatch humanitarian aid to the people of the city of Talafar in Iraq.

In this framework, as the first phase of the humanitarian aid of the Turkish Government, a humanitarian assistance convoy of the Turkish Red Crescent consisting of 7 TIRs, 2 emergency assistance ambulances, 3 communication vehicles and one for personnel is planned to pass the Habur Border Gate on 17 September 2004. The convoy is supposed to transfer 450 family tents, 3000 blankets and enough food and water to respond to the needs of 5000 people, together with 14 drivers, 3 technicians, 2 doctors, 2 nurses and a team of 15 personnel for dispatching the material.

The details of the vehicles, material and personnel of the convoy will be transmitted to the esteemed Embassy at the earliest convenient time.

The Ministry would highly appreciate the assistance of the esteemed Embassy in informing the relevant U.S. authorities and arranging the necessary security measures.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America the assurances of its highest consideration.

Ankara, 15 September 2004.

End text MFA note.

EDELMAN